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28 October 2003

Docket Management Facility
U.S. Department of Transportation
Room PL-401
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20590-0001

Re: Mandatory Ballast Water
Management Program for U.S.
Waters (USCG-2003-14273) - 33

Dear Sir or Madam;

Allied Transportation Company is an operator of US flagged Coastwise tugs and barges. Our primary trade is in Domestic routes within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), generally involving transits between two Captain of the Port zones. Most of our tugs, and some of our barges are fitted with designated ballast tanks, and as such will fall under the requirements of the proposed rules. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed rules.

First, we strongly endorse the comments to the docket submitted by the American Waterways Operators. We have worked closely with the American Waterways Operators to assist in developing our trade association's response to these proposed rules. The American Waterways Operators comments were developed with a great deal of input from many segments of the U.S. tug and barge industry, and we request that their comments be considered.

Additionally, our further concerns to the proposed Ballast Water Management regulations fall mainly in the following areas.

Applicability to All Vessels with Ballast Tanks

The proposed Ballast Management rules apply to all vessels with ballast tanks, with no minimum level of tank capacity. Many tugs and barges are fitted with ballast tanks with very small volumes. In some cases less than 5000 gallons. Much of a tug's ballasting and de-ballasting is



Member of The American Waterways Operators

directly related to the use and internal transfer of fuel oil. Ballast must be discharged or added frequently to compensate for the changes in vessel trim and stability caused by fuel burning. Many of these transfers involve very small quantities of ballast water. To require the development and implementation of Ballast Water Management plans for vessels with small amounts of ballast capability will be burdensome.

- A minimum ballast water transfer quantity and/or capacity should be established. Ballast water management or reporting should not be required below these amounts.

Applicability to all voyages outside the EEZ

During some domestic voyages, vessels transiting between two U.S. ports will sail outside the EEZ, while not conducting any ballast operations outside U.S. waters. As an example a vessel that conducts cargo and/or ballast operations in Houston, may leave the EEZ in the Gulf of Mexico while in transit, and conduct further ballast operations in their destination domestic port. No "foreign" ballast is transferred.

- Vessels on Domestic voyages that do not conduct ballast operations outside the EEZ should be exempt from the requirements.

Underway ballast exchange operations

We feel it is generally unsafe to conduct routine, non-emergency ballasting/de-ballasting operations on a barge at sea. Many of the Articulated Tug Barge (ATB) units require that the relative draft and trim between the push tug and barge be maintained when underway. On many of our voyages, conducting ballast water exchange when underway will result in extreme changes in list, trim and draft. Because of the inability to safely treat or exchange ballast water when underway, many Coastwise barges will be unable to comply with the management practices detailed in 151.2035 (b) (1-4).

Reporting Procedures

The reporting process appears to be geared toward Oceangoing deep draft vessels, on single port to single port voyages. A voyage for a tug and barge on a Coastwise voyage may involve multiple stops in different COTP zones.

Many vessels do not have reliable means of sending in a formatted report. As an example, while most of our vessels have E-mail

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capability, they don't have a means to send attachments, or work on the Internet . Fax reports from a vessel offshore, and on the fringes of cellular range, are very unreliable.

- Vessels on voyages outside the EEZ that do not perform any ballasting operations outside the EEZ should not have to report.
- Vessels on Coastwise voyages should be allowed to submit a multi-voyage report

Thank you for allowing these comments.

Yours truly,

ALLIED TRANSPORTATION COMPANY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David P. Owens', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David P. Owens
Manager, Barge Operations